Hiking Trails

There are over six miles of hiking trails in the preserve, and all are considered easy to moderate. All trailheads are identified by name, and trails are clearly marked with intermittent signposts.



A • The Alice Fries Trail is a half-mile loop trail. It starts and ends near the staging area kiosk. The trail follows along the north side of the San Luis Rey River and then turns back along the bluffs.

B • The Main Trail, which crosses the river, runs the length of the preserve and is flat and shaded. All of the other preserve trails start and end on the Main Trail. Restrooms and park benches are found along this trail. It serves as both the entrance and the exit trail from the preserve interior. This trail is an easy hike.

• The Upper Meadow Trail is the most scenic trail in the preserve, offering commanding views of the San Luis Rey River Valley and the mountainous region to the east. This trail is

Legend

⋖ Mileage Marker

- - · Hiking Trails

--- Park Boundary

Intermittent Creek

Ranger Station

Restrooms

D • The Pond Loop presents visitors with the opportunity to view nature both above and below the water in this small pond. A variety of amphibians, waterfowl, and other migratory birds can be seen in this area, along with the more frequently seen resident birds and animals.

E • The Camellia Trail is located at west end of the preserve. This short loop trail passes along an abandoned pond once used to irrigate hundreds of camellia plants. Although these flowers are gone, this trail exhibits the many trees and plants native to the region.

RULES & REGULATIONS

ACCIDENTS: The County of San Diego shall not be responsible for loss or accidents.

UNAUTHORIZED The unauthorized operation of motor vehicles is prohibited. MOTOR VEHICLES:

LITTERING: Is prohibited.

DEFACEMENT No person shall remove, deface, or PROHIBITED: destroy trail markers, monuments, fences, trees, camp or picnic structures,

or other preserve facilities.

PRESERVATION All wildlife, plant, and geologic OF TRAIL features are protected and are not to **FEATURES**: be damaged or removed. All historical artifacts are to be left in place.

PETS: Domestic pets are excluded from openspace preserves. Dogs accompanying

the unsighted or deaf are excepted.

NO HUNTING: No person shall use, transport, carry, fire, or discharge any firearms, air guns,

> archery device, slingshot, fireworks, or explosive device of any kind in

a preserve.

ALCOHOLIC No intoxicating liquors having more BEVERAGES: than 20% alcohol by volume are

permitted.

FIRE HAZARDS No smoking. Campfires are prohibited. AND SMOKING: Stoves allowed only in primitive group

camping area.

Preserve hours: 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Thursday – Monday

RESERVATIONS & INFORMATION



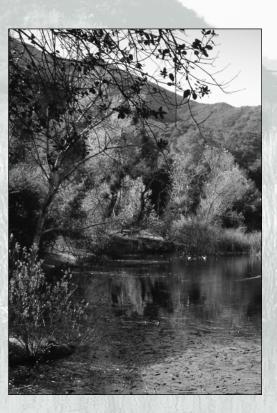
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WILDERNESS GARDENS

A San Diego County **Open Space Preserve**





Visit us online at www.sdparks.org

Welcome to Wilderness Gardens

ocated in northern San Diego County astride the San Luis Rey River is a hidden gem waiting to amaze visitors. Wilderness Gardens Open Space Preserve beautifully reflects the rich cultural and natural diversity of the region.

In 1973 Wilderness Gardens became the first open space preserve in San Diego County Parks. Today a combination of natural vegetation types, including oak woodland, riparian, chaparral, and coastal sage scrub, provide habitiat for a variety of indigenous wildlife. Many bird species, including migratory birds, resident waterfowl, and birds of prey are abundant. Coyotes, raccoons, bobcats, snakes, and deer are also commonly seen in the preserve.



Park amenities include a parking lot, small picnic area, several easy to moderate hiking trails, and a pond. Restrooms are available at the parking area and along the Main Trail.

The bountiful natural attractions of Wilderness Gardens are obvious, but the careful observer will also see evidence of countless generations of human habitation. For thousands of years, the Luiseño Indians inhabited this area and gathered acorns from oaks growing along the San Luis Rey River. Evidence of this is reflected in the grinding rocks located along the river. The Luiseño were hunter-gatherers who moved from the mountains to the coast as the seasons dictated.





In the 19th century, the area started to see new inhabitants. One of the most notable reminders of this period is the rock foundation from the 1881 Pala grist mill. Established by the Sickler Brothers, this was the first grist mill in northern San Diego County. Farmers and their families from all over the region brought their crops to be ground into flour. Because grinding wheat and corn into flour was a slow process, families spent several weeks camping out, meeting with seldom seen neighbors, and having great fun at the mill.

The property changed hands several times, becoming a ranch in the early 1900s. In the 1950s Manchester Boddy, noted editor, publisher, and owner of the *Los Angeles Daily News*, bought the property. As an avid horticulturalist, Boddy cultivated camellias, azaleas, lilacs, and other shrubs that he grew for sale. It was Mr. Boddy who coined the name "Wilderness Gardens."

Today friendly rangers offer interpretive programs and tours of the mill site by reservation.

Hiking Tips

Visitors should bring their own drinking water. There is no potable water in the preserve. Hikers should wear sturdy shoes. A hat and suitable clothing are also recommended. Hike with a companion. Please remember that Wilderness Gardens Preserve is an open space preserve. Mammals, reptiles, bees, and poison oak are natural parts of this environment. For your safety and the preservation of resources, visitors must remain on the designated trails at all times. Park Rangers are regularly in the ranger station or patrolling in the preserve.